

cc: Major Smith

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18 July 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL TAYLOR

SUBJECT: BERCONS-MARCONS Meeting with the President,
1000 hrs., Thursday, 19 July 1962

Tomorrow, 19 July, at 1000, State-Defense-JCS will meet with the President to secure his approval of a U.S. position on NATO's BERCONS and MARCONS prior to issuing instructions to the U.S. Representative on the Standing Group. Mr. Bundy is deciding on attendance, but I understand that the following will probably be there: Rusk, McNamara, Nitze, Kohler, Lemnitzer, and Gray. My ISA contact assumes that Bundy will provide for your attendance and will attend himself. A lot can change between now and tomorrow, but here is how the ISA people see the program:

a. Nitze to open with general orientation remarks on Berlin planning; unilateral poodle blanket, quadripartite contingency planning status, need to get NATO into the act, purpose of BERCONS-MARCONS

b. Lemnitzer to explain the BERCONS-MARCONS in broad outline

c. Gray to comment on the "feel of the troops" in the Berlin planning business, as noted on his recent trip to Europe.

2. There is a strong possibility that, if time permits, the State representatives will then open a discussion on the effect of a separate treaty on our Berlin vital interests. If they do, I envy their courage. It is a good thing they are thinking about it, because my bet is that the President is sure to hit them on it anyway. In fact, he may make a shambles of their briefing from the beginning by shooting questions all over.

3. Attached at Tab A is "the works" as sent to the President. It consists of:

a. A 16 July five-page explanatory cover memorandum signed by Secretaries Rusk and McNamara.

b. BQD-M-27, dated 12 July 1962. This is a quadripartitely agreed report, with splits included, from the Military Sub-Group to its parent Washington Ambassadorial Group.

c. Enclosure to BQD-M-27, dated 12 July 1962. This is more or less of a line-in, line-out listing of recommended changes to the BERCONS and MARCONS themselves.

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4. JCSM-513-62, dated 13 July 1962. This is a one-page blessing, with a mild caveat by the JCS.

4. As I have been noting to you lately, the Berlin contingency planning business has become extremely complex. This scheduled briefing is an example of it, and it calls upon the President to focus on a NATO "catalogue of plans" approach that is full of overlapping jurisdictions and channels. After reading over the attached papers, if you decide to send him a memorandum in anticipation of the meeting, I would recommend against summarizing or otherwise dealing with substance, because the two Secretaries have certainly done that in their rather lengthy cover memorandum. Instead I would propose a brief note in which you would recommend that he sit still for this admittedly fragmentary picture, then ask for a deliberately prepared overall briefing on all aspects of Berlin contingency planning (thus hopefully avoiding the pitfalls of quick answers to buckshot questions tomorrow).

5. I have a mass of background material, including all or most of the documents mentioned in the papers at Tab A. As of this moment, however, I do not have the BERCONS and MARCONS themselves, because my copies were the only ones in the White House, and Kissin gave them to Bundy to place in the President's package. I should have another set by noon, however. Meanwhile, attached at the Red Tab is a memorandum I used to cover the BERCONS and MARCONS to you when we first received them.

LEGEND

Attachments:

1. JCSM-513-62, dated 13 July 1962. This is a one-page blessing, with a mild caveat by the JCS.

2. Memorandum to the President, dated 12 July 1962. This is a one-page blessing, with a mild caveat by the JCS.

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